Nach 1989: ein virtuelle Roundtable

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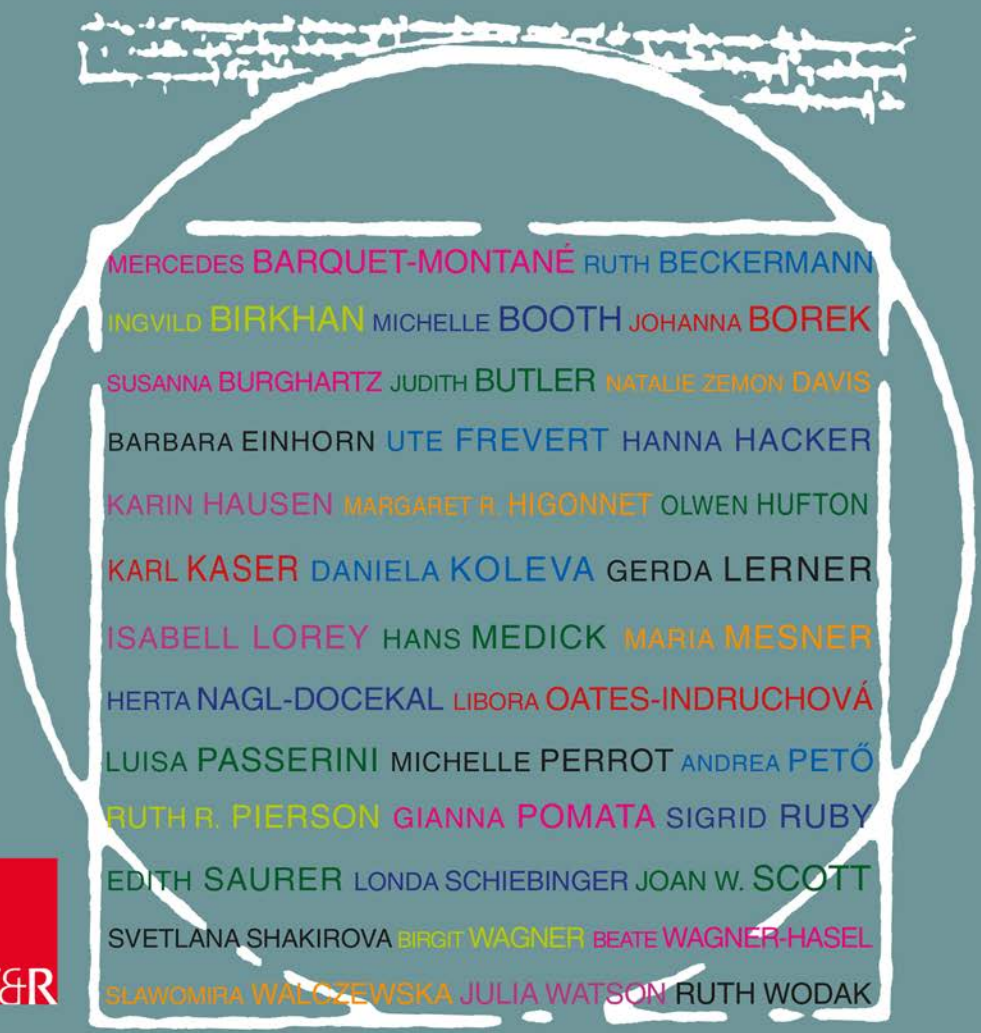
Preprint / Preprint
Sammelwerksbeitrag / collection article

Bauer / Hämmerle / Opitz-Belakhal (Hg.)

Politik – Theorie – Erfahrung

30 Jahre feministische Geschichtswissenschaft im Gespräch



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ISBN Print: 9783847110873 – ISBN E-Book: 9783847010876

L'Homme Schriften
Reihe zur Feministischen Geschichtswissenschaft

Band 26

Die Bände dieser Reihe sind peer-reviewed.

ISBN Print: 9783847110873 – ISBN E-Book: 9783847010876

Ingrid Bauer / Christa Hämmerle /
Claudia Opitz-Belakhal (Hg.)

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Mit 2 Abbildungen

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ISBN Print: 9783847110873 – ISBN E-Book: 9783847010876

Bibliografische Information der Deutschen Nationalbibliothek
Die Deutsche Nationalbibliothek verzeichnet diese Publikation in der Deutschen Nationalbibliografie; detaillierte bibliografische Daten sind im Internet über https://dnb.de abrufbar.

Gedruckt mit freundlicher Unterstützung des Instituts für Geschichte der Universität Wien, der Wissenschafts- und Forschungsförderung der Kulturabteilung der Stadt Wien, der Universität Basel und des Wissenschaftsressorts des Landes Salzburg.

Redaktion und Lektorat: Michaela Hafner
Lektorat der englischen Texte: Christine Brocks
Umschlagabbildung: © Jürgen Ehrmann

Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht Verlage | **www.vandenhoeck-ruprecht-verlage.com**

ISSN 2509-565X
ISBN 978-3-8470-1087-6

ISBN Print: 9783847110873 – ISBN E-Book: 9783847010876

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ISBN Print: 9783847110873 – ISBN E-Book: 9783847010876

Osteuropa- und Geschlechterforscherinnen im Gespräch mit Bożena Chołuj und Claudia Kraft (2017)*

Nach 1989: Ein virtueller Round Table**

Anstatt der üblichen Form eines Gesprächs haben wir im Rahmen eines „virtuellen Round Table" fünf kultur- und sozialwissenschaftlich arbeitende Kolleginnen aus unterschiedlichen europäischen Ländern danach gefragt, wie sie den Umbruch von 1989 sowohl aus ihrer jeweiligen fachwissenschaftlichen Sicht als auch aus lebensweltlicher Perspektive wahrgenommen haben:

Barbara Einhorn ist Germanistin und war bis zu ihrer Emeritierung Professorin für Soziologie an der University of Sussex. Ihre Forschungsthemen sind Geschlecht, Nation, Staatsbürgerschaft und Zivilgesellschaft – mit einem besonderen Fokus auf Mittel- und Osteuropa seit 1989. Daniela Koleva, Professorin für Geschichte und Kulturtheorie an der St. Kliment Ohridski Universität in Sofia, forscht zur Gesellschafts- und Kulturgeschichte Bulgariens nach 1945 sowie zur Erinnerung an die Zeit des Staatssozialismus in Osteuropa und ist eine Expertin für Oral History. Libora Oates-Indruchová ist Professorin für Geschlechtersoziologie an der Universität Graz. In ihren Forschungen nimmt sie die kulturelle Repräsentation von Geschlecht und den beschleunigten gesellschaftlichen Wandel vor allem in Mittel- und Osteuropa aus geschlechterge-

* Bożena Chołuj ist Professorin am Institut für Germanistik der Universität Warschau und Professorin für Deutsch-Polnische Kultur- und Literaturbeziehungen und Gender Studies an der Europa-Universität Viadrina Frankfurt (Oder). Ihre Forschungsschwerpunkte umfassen Stereotypenforschung, Interkulturalität; Körper, Politik und Gender; textuelle Reproduktion von Machtverhältnissen der Geschlechter; Frauenbewegung und Genderforschung in Polen (unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der Transformationsprozesse). Dem Herausgeberinnenkollektiv von „L'Homme. Z. F. G." gehört sie seit 2007 an.
Claudia Kraft lehrte von 2005 bis 2011 an der Universität Erfurt Geschichte Ostmitteleuropas und danach an der Universität Siegen Europäische Zeitgeschichte seit 1945; seit 2018 ist sie Professorin für Kultur-, Wissens- und Geschlechtergeschichte am Institut für Zeitgeschichte der Universität Wien. Ihre aktuellen Forschungsschwerpunkte sind die Geschlechtergeschichte des Staatssozialismus, Rechtsgeschichte des 20. Jahrhunderts in transnationaler Perspektive, Geschichte von Zwangsmigrationen im Umfeld des Zweiten Weltkrieges sowie die Geschichte und Zukunft der *area studies*. Sie ist seit 2014 Mitherausgeberin von „L'Homme. Z. F. G.".

** Zuerst veröffentlicht in L'Homme, 28, 1 (2017): Nach 1989, hg. von Bożena Chołuj u. Claudia Kraft, 123–138. Erscheint hier mit erweiterter Einleitung.

ISBN Print: 9783847110873 – ISBN E-Book: 9783847010876

schichtlicher Perspektive in den Blick. Andrea Pető lehrt an der Central European University (CEU) in Budapest. Die Forschungsschwerpunkte der Professorin für Gender Studies sind die vergleichende europäische Geschlechtergeschichte, die Geschichte der Frauenbewegungen sowie die Geschichte des Holocaust. Sławomira Walczewska ist promovierte Philosophin und Publizistin sowie Gründerin und Leiterin der Frauenstiftung eFKa in Krakau. Sie forscht und publiziert zur Geschichte des Feminismus und zur Frauenbewegung in Polen.

Uns interessierte bei diesem virtuellen Gespräch, was von „1989" geblieben ist und wie eine Historisierung des Endes des Kalten Krieges sowie der sich daran anschließenden Entwicklungen aussehen könnte, ohne in das normative Narrativ der „Rückkehr nach Europa" zu verfallen, beziehungsweise wie man über die sozialistische Epoche sprechen kann, ohne diese als glücklich überwundenen Totalitarismus zu verdammen oder (n)ostalgisch zu verklären.

Wir haben an alle fünf Kolleginnen zwei Fragen gerichtet: Kann eine geschlechtersensible Perspektive auf den Umbruch von 1989 die gängigen Narrative der „Rückkehr nach Europa" verändern, da sich ja Kontinuitäten und Brüche zwischen vorsozialistischer, sozialistischer und postsozialistischer Zeit in Bezug auf Geschlechterverhältnisse anders darstellen als in konventionellen Erzählungen? Wie verändern die Erfahrungen der postsozialistischen Zeit (Neuordnung/Re-Konfiguration der Geschlechterverhältnisse) unsere Perspektive auf den Staatssozialismus, wenn wir davon ausgehen, dass wir es nicht mit einer linearen Entwicklung hin zu ‚universalen' Werten zu tun haben, sondern dass diese Werte in sozialistischer wie postsozialistischer Zeit immer geschlechtlich codiert waren und es bis heute sind?

Der in der ersten Hälfte des Jahres 2016 entstandene Round Table steht ohne Zweifel unter dem Eindruck der jüngsten zeithistorischen Ereignisse, wie dem Brexit, dem anwachsenden Populismus in zahlreichen europäischen Staaten, der Wahl Donald Trumps zum US-Präsidenten und den andauernden Herausforderungen, die die Bedrohung durch den Terrorismus für die europäischen Gesellschaften bedeuten. Ein skeptischer Grundton durchzieht die Stellungnahmen unserer Diskutantinnen, der sich sowohl aus den aktuellen Entwicklungen als auch aus den vielfach nicht erfüllten Hoffnungen erklärt, die an den Umbruch von 1989 geknüpft waren. Gerade in Hinblick auf Phänomene wie Anti-Genderismus oder auch die Aneignung identitätspolitischer Diskurse durch konservative und reaktionäre politische Strömungen betonen aber alle, dass die Kategorie Geschlecht als Instrument zur Analyse gesellschaftlicher Dominanzverhältnisse wie auch Geschlechtergerechtigkeit als Indikator für die Qualität einer demokratischen politischen Kultur wichtiger denn je sind.

ISBN Print: 9783847110873 – ISBN E-Book: 9783847010876

Barbara Einhorn: The question which faces Europe most pressingly is not only whether there has been progress since 1989 on creating gender equal citizenship as a prerequisite for socially just societies, but more generally, how healthy democracy itself is today. The EU is weak and contested, especially after the disastrous Brexit vote, and it is still national governments which wield the power of inclusion and exclusion, as vividly demonstrated by the current intransigent stance of individual EU states such as Britain or Hungary towards the desperate plight of refugees fleeing war, conflict and poverty.

The euphoria surrounding the fall of the Wall fostered great hopes of a new epoch of peaceful change towards material wellbeing as well as political freedom for the former state socialist countries, bringing about a convergence of East and West. In fact, the dominance of neoliberal ideology prioritised individual over social responsibility and set about shrinking the state in favour of a market-led economy which would, according to that ideology, suffice as social regulator.

Today this ideology can be seen to have failed. Everywhere there is hugely increased social inequality, and gender equality has (as the EU Institute for Gender Equality reported in 2015) slowed almost to a halt since 2005. This both reflects a lack of political will and demonstrates the disproportionate burden borne by women, especially as a result of the 2008 recession.

However, if neoliberalism is dead, someone has forgotten to inform national governments. Faced with the increasing power of global corporations and a perceived loss of sovereignty to the EU, individual countries are retreating into inward-looking, indeed xenophobic nationalisms. Governments continue to support the creed of individualism and have surrendered to the unbridled might of banks and financial markets. They now use the newly rediscovered virtue of state intervention, not to mitigate the effects of the economics of greed, by creating more jobs or supporting greater investment in health, education, social care and welfare support. Rather they deploy divisive populist rhetoric, identifying scapegoats on which to focus the anger of disaffected, neglected voters. In the current scenario, the concept of citizenship has been degraded to the right to vote. The fiasco of reducing complex questions to a simple 'yes' or 'no' vote renders referenda a very questionable democratic instrument, as the British case clearly illustrates. Citizenship as a package of rights and responsibilities within a context of social cohesion has disappeared in favour of a dog-eats-dog approach, in which economic success or failure is posited as a purely individual responsibility. Indeed the whole notion of social responsibility for a healthy political culture, for economic justice and social cohesion has disappeared.

This has clear consequences for gender equality. I have long argued that gender equal and socially just societies require a framework of claimable entitlements. This requires public investment in infrastructure and social services. Such state intervention has long been recognised by economists as necessary for

ISBN Print: 9783847110873 – ISBN E-Book: 9783847010876

balanced, healthy economies and social welfare. Understandable as rejection of state intervention was in the immediate aftermath of the oppressive state socialist experience, it is important for feminists to reconsider the role of the state as enabler of the preconditions for making gender equal citizenship work.

Are there fewer borders and barriers since the Berlin Wall fell in 1989? Above all, has the Wall in our heads fallen, leaving more openness and tolerance in place of prejudice and discrimination? Sadly, the opposite is true. European politics in 2016 is characterised by toxic and exclusionary discourses, fostering hatred of Others. These have created a climate in which people feel entitled to express openly their racism, homophobia and misogynistic behaviour. Sexual abuse and violence against women are far from being confined to distant countries dominated by ignorance, poverty or conflict; no, they are endemic within our supposedly civilised European countries.

Scholars of gender have long argued that gender, or a gender perspective can be seen either as a lens or tool with which to understand better and measure more accurately the health of the social fabric. This is apt because gender characterises most social relations, as well as being constituent of all professions, all political and social structures. As a gender-sensitive approach is inherently cross-disciplinary, it is also an appropriate tool of analysis in all academic disciplines. I would argue that today gender is more than a perspective, a way of seeing, or a tool of measurement. In a bitter twist to the practice by which those on the right borrow, co-opt or steal the ideas or the political discourse of the left in order to appeal to the left's traditional voters, feminist discourse is now being instrumentalised by ultra-conservative, populist and extreme right-wing politicians in support of nationalistic and authoritarian policies.

There are many and proliferating examples of gender being used as alibi or figleaf for exclusionary nationalism, and in the process becoming a barometer of the shift to politically fomented intolerance, as well as of social unease in integrating Others into our increasingly multicultural societies. This applies to attempted prohibitions on women's clothing, but also to expressions of concern for women's rights used not as justification for human rights standards, but quite the opposite, as rationalisation for discriminatory practices. Even the first Muslim Mayor of London Saddiq Khan bowed to this pressure during his election campaign in 2016 by opposing veiling, suggesting that openness was necessary in a democratic society. Unfortunately no such demand for transparency applies to the business dealings of multinational companies which avoid paying national taxes, using fictitious companies and tax havens to mask or veil their inordinately huge profits.

Anti-terrorist concerns were dismissed as false arguments by the French court which overturned the scandalous burkini ban in summer 2016. The multiple ironies in pictures of policemen standing over a woman on a French beach

ISBN Print: 9783847110873 – ISBN E-Book: 9783847010876

demanding that she undress in the name of public decency and security can scarcely be over-stated. Obviously the whole burkini fiasco had nothing to do with either concerns for gender equality or respect for women's right to choose what they wear. Rather it revealed a country where understandable nervousness in the wake of terrorist attacks has fuelled resentment of the country's large and discriminated Muslim population.

When large numbers of women were sexually harassed or assaulted at a Cologne New Year celebration (2015/16), apparently by men of North African or Arabic appearance, rather than sexual abuse becoming the focus of discussion, the event was used to stoke outrage and opposition to Chancellor Angela Merkel's 2015 open-door policy towards Syrian refugees. Subsequent regional electoral successes for the AfD, the so-called Alternative for Germany, bear out the success of this populist rhetoric. The Polish so-called War on Gender, or on 'Genderism' is a rather different example, in which gender is used as a weapon in an increasing rejection of liberal values of tolerance, democracy and individual choice. The Polish government's back down from a total ban on abortion as a result of huge demonstrations by women all over the country is testament to the power of popular movements, even in the context of increasingly authoritarian governments. As many of the women involved recognised, however, this was merely the prelude to much-needed campaigning to liberalise the tightly restrictive existing abortion law. Indeed the 'war' on 'gender madness' declared in Poland and elsewhere encompasses multiple issues including intolerance of gays and opposition to sex education, derided by some Polish churchmen as worse than the Holocaust.

In a variety of contexts, then, contested or conflicted political terrain is muddied and obscured ('veiled' and thereby mystified) by being 're-presented' as a question of gender or of religion. While gender oppressions such as unequal pay, unequal political and professional representation, lack of childcare provision or violence against women continue unabated, feminism and gender equality are constructed as 'the enemy', standing in for, or distracting attention from dangerous and distorted socio-political tendencies.

It is time for a feminist rethink. 2016 is not 1989, nor even 2009. The rejection of the entire state socialist experience as a form of Soviet colonialism was paralleled by the post-colonialist turn in Western European scholarship. Resulting emphasis on the differences *between* women, and *between* histories in East and West eclipsed the need to recognise the commonalities between feminists across Europe subjected to the individualistic bent of neoliberalism with its rejection of citizenship rights and social justice aspirations. While it was important at the time to stress the specificities of different experiences, it is all the more important now, while recognising and celebrating those differences and specificities, to work together in feminist solidarity for a more inclusive politics. Feminists in

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Eastern and Western Europe need to hear each other's voices, acknowledge the located politics of their various situations, and yet act together against narrow nationalisms, closed borders and xenophobia, and for gender equal, socially just and inclusive societies. Only thus can we avoid conflicts and rescue the European project of cooperation between peaceful and tolerant democracies.

Daniela Koleva: The question about the 'Return to Europe' narrative and its current situation has at least two aspects. One obviously refers to the present post-optimist atmosphere in the post-communist countries, triggered by the various crises in Europe and the world. The 'return' narrative is in crisis, as well as the 'Europe' project itself. (I am aware that I am skipping the question of what 'Europe' is.) The other aspect – less obvious but, to my mind, no less important – relates to the stories we tell about the recent past as contemporaries and researchers, to how we conceptualise and make sense of it. It is this question that I would like to tackle here.

The first conundrum is that there are two concepts, 'socialism' and 'communism', each of them linked to a context. 'Communism' comes from the so-called 'totalitarian' paradigm, dating back to Cold-War Western theorising, especially in political science and political philosophy. The term 'socialism', coined by the regimes themselves (in the same Cold-War context) is associated with the more recent 'revisionist' paradigm, which takes up the 'indigenous' term reconceptualised in social anthropology, social history and the history of everyday life. Both paradigms have been criticised for privileging some aspects of the past and glossing over others, for being 'demonising' or 'normalising' in their approach. Furthermore, each term seems to refer not only to disciplinary but also to national contexts, national memory cultures and strategies of dealing with the past.

In this frame of reference, the 'return' narrative singles out change, discontinuity and rupture, painting a picture of an aborted normality, a deviation, which is now being amended.

Ironically however, in constructing the recent past as a halt in the 'normal' development, the 'Return to Europe' narrative tends to mirror the one of the communist regimes, according to which all positive achievements started from Day One of the revolution – a kind of a 'big bang'. Thus, for instance, the Decree of 16 October 1944 granting equal rights to men and women in Bulgaria is widely known, while women's struggles and achievements since the early twentieth century have remained mostly a matter of professional historical interest (e. g. the fact that married women already had voting rights since the late 1930s). Continuities across the dividing year 1944 can be observed in labour and family legislation. As far as maternity is concerned – a common theme in the discussions of socialism from a gender perspective – provisions were established by

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the 1917 Law of Hygiene and Safety: an eight-week leave before and after birth, during which mothers were to receive half of their wages. Women could not be fired during this period. Under the Social Security Law passed in 1924, the maternity leave increased to twelve weeks. (The Labour Code of 1951 added six days to it.) With 75 per cent rural population in 1944, working predominantly on their own farms, these provisions must have initially been of no immediate relevance for most Bulgarians. Maternity leave became an issue with women's growing full-time employment (over 90 per cent by the mid-1970s) and with the steadily decreasing birth rates.

If I may venture a hypothesis based on the Bulgarian case, it is noteworthy that after each coup d'état (i. e. 1923 and 1934) there followed a series of laws in the social sphere: social security laws, poor relief laws, laws dealing with unemployment, etc. My hypothesis is that the regimes, which came to power in an illegitimate, sometimes violent way sought to establish themselves and to gain support vis-à-vis a deficit of legitimacy. Furthermore, their authoritarian nature implied greater centralisation and efficiency in imposing care and control. The 'big bang' rhetoric aside, there are telling parallels with the regime that came as a result of the 1944 coup. Thus, my first point is that taking a deeper historical perspective free from ideological stereotypes can show interesting continuities in some respects.

My second point is about the usefulness of comparison. Numerous studies have shown the adverse effects of the post-communist transition on women, including rising unemployment. Some authors have designated the period as 'conservative revolutions'. At the transition's end however, we see that the gender gap in employment rates is lowest in the post-communist countries Lithuania, Latvia and Bulgaria, followed by Estonia, Croatia and Slovenia (and with closely comparable rates in Finland, Portugal and Sweden).[1] These results are quite compatible with the social expectations of women's work in the public sector established during the communist-party rule in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe. However, when it comes to paid maternity leave and working time arrangements to meet family needs, the picture gets more diverse and precludes easy generalisations about the achievements and legacies of the communist rule.[2]

1 Full-time equivalent employment rates for 2014 according to OECD Family Database, Chart LMF 1.6.A., at: http://www.oecd.org/els/soc/LMF_1_6_Gender_differences_in_employment_outcomes.pdf, access: 26 September 2016.

2 OECD Family Database, Table PF2.1.A (data for 2015), at: http://www.oecd.org/els/soc/PF2_1_Parental_leave_systems.pdf, and OECD Family Database, Chart LMF 2.4.B (data for 2010), at: http://www.oecd.org/els/family/LMF_2-4-Family-friendly-workplace-practices.pdf, access: 26 September 2016.

ISBN Print: 9783847110873 – ISBN E-Book: 9783847010876

To conclude, the 'Return to Europe' was an optimistically sounding formula for a civilisational choice in the 1990s. The choice has to be respected and vindicated, but the formula does not seem particularly helpful in making sense of the recent past from a historical and social-science perspective. In this context, it is at best a cliché, and at worst, it introduces a normativity that is far from productive.

Libora Oates-Indruchová: In 1994, I interviewed ten Czech women of different generations for an international project led by Chris Corrin from Glasgow University on women's experience of the transition from state socialism. When my team colleagues and I asked whether '1989' was a turning point in their lives "as women", several of the interviewees responded in the negative and pondered why the year should even be seen as a landmark. I was intrigued, for I took it for granted that *everybody's* life must have changed as a consequence of the *annus mirabilis*, 1989. I took up the question of continuities and discontinuities from state socialism regarding discourses of gender in culture as my PhD project and have written on this issue at length. The thrust of my argument has been that traditional gender imagery lived on throughout state socialism and that it was even positioned as subversive to the official discourse, which hoisted it to a high moral ground after the demise of state socialism and opened the doors to cultural imagery disempowering for women and, by extension, anti-emancipatory political rhetoric. More recently, several studies in a team project on the gender culture of state socialism pointed to the deep-seated sexism in Czech culture.[3] It should not be surprising then that the catch phrase 'Return to Europe', so overused in various political contexts in the years before the EU accession, was not referred to in the context of gender equality. Instead, a 'return to traditional values' was invoked, failing to specify to which social class and period of time these 'traditions' belonged. The list of issues on which politicians took a clear stance 'away from' rather than 'back to' Europe would go on for pages: starting with the fact that transition policies typically did not concern themselves with the equality of the sexes, to years of deafness to issues of domestic violence and trafficking in women, to the blatant refusal to promote women's political participation. Reluctantly and with a good deal of formalism, Czech government had to ponder the equality of the sexes as part of the EU accession proceedings.[4] The resistance to changes in this area re-emerged a few years later during the dis-

3 Cf. Hana Havelková and Libora Oates-Indruchová (eds.), The Politics of Gender Culture under State Socialism: An Expropriated Voice, London/New York 2014.

4 Cf. Petr Pavlík, A report on the state of equal opportunities in the Czech Republic: broken promises, window dressing and complicity, in: Blanka Knotková-Čapková (ed.), Ročenka Katedry/Centra genderových studií 2003–2004 [Yearbook of the Chair/Center for Gender Studies], Praha 2004, 158–171.

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cussions of the anti-discrimination Act, the Czech Republic being the last EU country to pass such a law.

As to the second question that you are asking, state socialism was not such a social experiment as some would like to see it; however, its temporary existence and subsequent fall created an unprecedented social and cultural context that ought to excite social scientists. What can we learn, in this case, about gender from an environment with two generations of emancipation rhetoric and institutional measures and from which this rhetoric as good as disappeared, with institutional changes to follow? One example: gender and mathematics. If someone told me that I had to live another day under state socialism, I would run. Yet, I have to admit that in my entire schooling experience, it was never suggested to me by anybody that mathematics was a subject in which I was expected to do less well because I was a girl, nor did I notice a different attitude to me or to the subject by male or female teachers of mathematics. My mother, who went to school in the 1950s, has the same experience. In the more than twenty years of researching state socialism, I have never come across a single cultural reference or a mention in political discourse of the existence of a gender bias in mathematics. I believe that 'girls and mathematics' was not an issue in the classroom or public discussion. Then, some time in the early 2000s, a research project arrived in my inbox, proposing to investigate why girls were performing poorly in mathematics, referring to the concerns expressed on the topic in the public discussion. I do not remember whether the text cited any statistics about the relative performance in mathematics by sex, I assume it did. I do remember, however, that it neither made reference to the situation during state socialism nor to a perceived change since. The proposal made the ahistorical assumption that girls having difficulties in mathematics was how things have always been. It did not concern itself with the cultural and institutional context of state socialism and post-socialism. Instead, it asked the same questions that North American and West European scholars had asked before, but it missed the opportunity for a truly new contribution to knowledge: to compare environments with and without the ever-present rhetoric of the equality of the sexes. State socialism as a historical period is a little-mined resource for social theory, including gender theory.

Andrea Pető: In 1989 – the *annus mirabilis* that ended the Cold War or the 'end of history' as Francis Fukuyama has called it – liberalism established a victorious political system that we call neoliberalism, which, in Fukuyama's view, essentially cannot be improved in any way, so that there is no real alternative to it. In that system feminism found a comfortable space of its own. Promoting women's equality in the neoliberal framework, when it in fact depends on the individual woman how she is 'leaning in', brought disastrous results. There is an entire

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library worth of literature about how women are the biggest losers of the political regime changes in Eastern Europe after 1989. Although the societal status of women was not exactly rosy before 1989 either, the situation under state feminism (idealised by several researchers nonetheless) has deteriorated further in politics, the economy and culture. The elimination of childcare systems has reduced the possibilities of women to take on jobs, the feminisation of poverty has continued. Through their unpaid labour, women must leverage the malfunctioning of healthcare and social service systems. All this is expected from women while they are structurally excluded from political representation. While the rhetoric was 'catching up with Europe' this 'Europe' was not delivering social rights to its citizens nor offered a space for meaningful criticism either. This politics of forgetting was omitting not only the progressive European tradition of emancipation but also made everyone believe in a delusion that the dark legacy of Europe has been defeated forever in 1945. The European project began, as the Preamble of the European Constitution states, with 'believing that Europe' was 'reunited after bitter experiences'. The words 'bitter experiences' euphemistically describe genocidal practices, political violence, forced resettlement and deportation and the colonial heritage, just to mention a few calamities of twentieth century European history. The concept of the European Union is based on the memory of World War II and the Holocaust as 'bitter experiences' from which we should learn – especially how to avoid such events happening again. The triple crises: the 2008 financial crises, the refugee and security crises, however, questioned Europe as a neoliberal project and put forward different concepts of Europe. In defining this 'dark Europe', gender relations also play a constitutive part. Illiberal democracies and closing societies in the European Union are redefining the foundation of the democratic system. They have invented something fundamentally new, which is not traditional anti-feminism, but what they call 'anti-gender' movement. These movements use 'gender' as a mobilisation category to foster hate against different groups of the society. This is also a part of 'dark Europe', the tradition we falsely believed is no longer with us. It is here and kicking and it depends on human rights based feminists to invent new strategies to fight against it.

Sławomira Walczewska:[5] Im östlichen Teil Europas gab es keine sexuelle Revolte wie im Westen im Jahr 1968. Wir hatten zwar freien Zugang zu Scheidungen und Abtreibungen, aber wir hatten keine sexuelle Bildung. Die Doppelmoral mit der offiziell einzig akzeptierten Form der sexuellen Verhältnisse, nämlich der Hetero-Ehe, und den inoffiziellen, aber breit praktizierten „Seitensprüngen" *(skoki*

5 Die beiden ursprünglich in polnischer Sprache verfassten Statements von Sławomira Walczewska wurden von Claudia Kraft ins Deutsche übersetzt.

ISBN Print: 9783847110873 – ISBN E-Book: 9783847010876

na bok) und der „Ehe-Verrate“ *(zdrady małżeńskie)* herrschte in Polen überall und ungestört. Die Zeichen der westlichen sexuellen Revolte, die in Gestalt von Pornozeitschriften und später auch Pornofilmen nach Polen geschmuggelt wurden, waren einerseits faszinierend, bestätigten aber andererseits die schlechte Reputation des „imperialistischen“ oder auch des moralisch „verfaulten“ *(zgniły)* Westens.

Der Aufbruch der Bürgerbewegung 1980 wurde als Explosion der Freiheit empfunden und als „Karneval der Solidarność“[6] bezeichnet. Hat sich das auch auf die persönliche, körperliche und sexuelle Freiheit ausgedehnt? Meine These ist: ja und nein. Ja, weil sich die Verhältnisse zwischen Frauen und Männern gelockert haben. Nein, weil die Frauen sehr schnell dafür einen hohen Preis bezahlt haben.

Das kürzlich von Marta Dzido publizierte Buch „Kobiety Solidarności“[7] (Frauen der Solidarität) und ihr kurz davor gedrehter Dokumentarfilm „Solidarność kobiet“ (Solidarität der Frauen) haben aufs Neue die Diskussion über die Präsenz von Aktivistinnen der Solidarność-Bewegung im öffentlichen Leben angefacht. In ihren Forschungen stützt sich Marta Dzido auf visuelle Dokumente aus der damaligen Zeit und sucht nach Frauen, die während der Umbruchszeit sichtbar und politisch aktiv gewesen sind. Sie fragt speziell nach Namen der anonymen, in den historischen Dokumenten nicht beschriebenen Aktivistinnen und rekonstruiert sorgfältig ihre Rolle in der Bewegung und ihre Schicksale.

Ihre ‚Lieblingsheldinnen‘ sind die Frauen, die sich dafür eingesetzt haben, dass der Streik auf der Danziger Werft im August 1980 nach drei Tagen in einen Solidaritätsstreik, mit dem auch die Forderungen anderer kleinerer Betriebe unterstützt wurden, umgestaltet (und nicht abgebrochen) wurde. Die Arbeiter waren zuvor informiert worden, dass all ihre Forderungen akzeptiert wurden. Sie wollten die Werft verlassen, wurden jedoch von drei Frauen aufgehalten. Von diesen sind Anna Walentynowicz und Alina Pieńkowska bekannt, die dritte aber, Ewa Ossowska, ist aus dem öffentlichen Gedächtnis verschwunden. Marta Dzido ist es gelungen, mehrere Fotos und Filmaufnahmen von Ossowska aus der Zeit der Solidarność zu finden. Letztendlich hat sie Ossowska selbst in Süditalien aufgespürt und interviewt.[8] Ossowska war Anfang der 1990er Jahre aus ökonomischen Gründen von Polen nach Australien emigriert. Sie hatte drei Kinder, war geschieden und hatte ihre Stelle verloren. In der Gewerkschaft wurde sie nicht

6 Padraic Kenney, A Carnival of Revolution: Central Europe 1989, Princeton, NJ 2003.

7 Marta Dzido, Kobiety solidarności [Frauen der Solidarität], Warszawa 2016, 64.

8 Vgl. dazu Karol Sauerland, Zur Rolle der Frauen der Solidarność-Bewegung vor und nach 1989, in: L’Homme. Z. F. G., 28, 1 (2017), 89–106; Shana Penn, Solidarity’s Secret: The Women Who Defeated Communism in Poland, Ann Arbor 2005; Ewa Kondratowicz, Szminka na sztandarze. Kobiety Solidarności 1980–1989. Rozmowy [Schminke auf dem Banner. Frauen der Solidarność 1980–1989. Gespräche], Warszawa 2001.

ISBN Print: 9783847110873 – ISBN E-Book: 9783847010876

angestellt, was in Hinblick auf ihr vorangegangenes Engagement und ihre Kompetenz erstaunlich war. Im Film von Andrzej Wajda über Lech Wałęsa, „Człowiek z nadziei" (Der Mann aus Hoffnung, 2013), findet Marta Dzido die Schlüsselszene aus dem Streik, die sich zwar auf historische Filmdokumente bezieht, in der Ewa Ossowska jedoch durch einen Mann ersetzt wurde („An der Stelle, in der man in den Dokumentaraufnahmen Ewa Ossowska sieht, lässt Wajda einen Schauspieler auftreten, einen schnauzbärtigen Arbeiter in einer beigen Jacke; er steht neben dem zukünftigen Präsidenten und wiederholt die Geste Ossowskas."[9]). Ossowska bleibt also nicht nur anonym, sondern wurde absichtlich anonymisiert.

Im Buch von Marta Dzido sagt eine (erneut anonyme) Frau: „Was uns von der Solidarność geblieben ist? […] außereheliche Kinder."[10] Die enge Mitarbeiterin von Wałęsa, die junge Ewa Ossowska, hielt zahlreiche Reden an die ArbeiterInnen und war Mitglied der Delegation der Solidarność, die mit Lech Wałęsa nach Warschau fuhr, um die Gewerkschaft registrieren zu lassen. Trotzdem findet man ihren Namen nicht in der 2010 erschienenen „Encyklopedia Solidarności" (Enzyklopädie der Solidarność). War sie eine Bedrohung für das offizielle Bild von Wałęsa als anständigem Ehemann und Vater, der immer das Bild der Mutter Gottes am Revers trug? Musste sie deswegen ausgegrenzt, vergessen und verschwiegen werden?

Die bekannte Sängerin Renata Przemyk singt im Lied „Prinsówna" über eine verbotene Liebe in einer illegalen Druckerei: „Der Drucker setzte den umstürzlerischen Text, als ich dieses sinnliche Flüstern hörte. Er sagte: Ich liebe dich so sehr, sehr gerne hätte ich, dass sich unsere Körper berührten."

Damals – und bis heute – gab und gibt es keine Sprache dafür, über freie, außereheliche Beziehungen in der Zeit des „Karneval der Solidarność" so zu sprechen, dass keine/r der Beteiligten denunziert oder bloßgestellt würde. Männliche Solidarität in der Ausblendung von ‚Kavaliersdelikten' einerseits und weibliches Schweigen aus Angst vor dem Vorwurf der ‚Unanständigkeit' ergänzen sich gegenseitig.

Im Anschluss an die ersten Stellungnahmen haben wir unseren Diskutantinnen die Gelegenheit gegeben, sich in einer zweiten Runde nochmals aufeinander zu beziehen.

Barbara Einhorn: It is striking to note the parallels in the arguments raised by each contributor to this Round Table discussion, and the level of agreement between their contributions. Daniela Koleva rightly discusses the level of con-

9 Dzido, Kobiety, wie Anm. 7, 64.
10 Dzido, Kobiety, wie Anm. 7, 89.

ISBN Print: 9783847110873 – ISBN E-Book: 9783847010876

tinuities, rather than the oft-vaunted ruptures linking the period before WWII with the state socialist period and the time since 1989. She also notes the limited usefulness and even counter-productive nature of the 'Return to Europe' discourse. That discourse was in itself ideological, with the notable failure, as Libora Oates-Indruchová notes, to include the issue of gender equality in its application to countries in Central and Eastern Europe. She is right to emphasise the contrary: that in the EU accession process, most of these countries complied unwillingly and in a minimal way with EU gender equality directives while purveying 'disempowering cultural imagery' and 'anti-emancipatory rhetoric' in the public space. This underlines her point about the former state socialist countries providing a kind of laboratory test case for social transformation which should have been of more interest than it has been granted by social and gender theorists. Surely, a big part of the problem here is the dominant discourse which has decreed a 'writing out' of the entire state socialist history. Andrea Pető aptly labels 1989 the 'year of forgetting' and Sławomira Walczewska documents the truly shocking way in which Andrej Wajda deliberately excised one of the leading women Solidarność activists from his filmic account of the political transformations beginning in Poland in 1980. Despite the problematic nature of her reduction of the so-called sexual revolution in the West to the import of porn, this is an illuminating example of the way in which throughout history, women's contributions and participation have been written out.[11]

One aspect of the transformation process resulting from the knee-jerk rejection of everything to do with the state, and the state socialist regimes, was the undue idealisation of the role and capacity of civil society. Andrea Pető accurately pinpoints the way in which this allowed neoliberal regimes to shrink the state in favour of the market, leaving unpaid women's labour to fill the void in health and social care. This is something I have in the past called the 'civil society trap'.[12] A further aspect of that 'trap' is what I have named the 'civil society gap'.[13] This refers to the fact that while ostensibly it is parliamentary democracy and political freedom that triumphed after 1989, in practice there is a lack of channels of communication from the grassroots civil society level to the mainstream machinery of government. In other words, not only has there been a failure to recognise the centrality of gender equality to the establishment of democratic and socially just societies, but that very lack of acknowledgement indicates the

11 Sheila Rowbotham's early and path-breaking publication, published at the time of the so-called 'sexual revolution' and the blossoming of Second Wave Feminism was tellingly entitled "Hidden from History: 300 Years of Women's Oppression and the Fight Against It", London 1973.

12 Barbara Einhorn, Citizenship in an Enlarging Europe: From Dream to Awakening, Basingstoke 2006/2010.

13 Einhorn, Citizenship, see note 12.

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failure to establish truly democratic societies post-1989. This failure is of course not limited to Central and Eastern European countries, but also increasingly characterises current Western European neoliberal regimes.

Sadly, one factor which feminist researchers need to acknowledge is the way in which feminist activists themselves tend to underestimate and therefore collude with the 'writing out' of their contribution to social and political change. This is true, for example, of the Women for Peace (Frauen für den Frieden) in East Germany who have not seriously contested the under-valuing in historiography of their part in ensuring that the so-called 'peaceful revolution' of 1989 did indeed remain peaceful. In many of Central and Eastern European countries, the post-1989 anti-gender equality discourse and imagery tended to meet and reinforce a propensity on the part of women themselves to 'buy into' the 'rediscovery of traditional values' of which Libora Oates-Indruchová writes. This opens the way for the use of gender in populist misogynist rhetoric as a 'bogeyman' in a strategy to whip up the ugly, xenophobic and narrow nationalist attitudes, which have been so successfully aroused not only in Poland and Hungary, but in Britain during the EU referendum debate and in the USA during the recent presidential election, both of these with potentially catastrophic results. The genie is out of the bottle: the discourse is toxic, the mood is ugly. The road to undoing this dangerous current climate will be hard and long. Seen in the light of these more recent developments, the successful Polish women's demonstrations of summer 2016 appear all the more significant as a possible turning point against the tide of hatred and exclusion, towards a more caring and inclusive sort of society. We need to hold onto the belief that change towards more gender equal and socially just societies is possible.

Daniela Koleva: Although our takes on the topic 'After 1989' may look quite different, we all seem to worry about two fundamental questions: how to understand the past and how to make sense of the present. And, moreover, if and how the former can aid the latter. I must admit that I am learning about Ewa Ossowska only now, reading Sławomira Walczewska's intervention. That is to say, male solidarity and women's silence have had an effect on how we imagine the „Karneval der Solidarität" now. Therefore I have to agree with Libora Oates-Indruchová that the 'Return to Europe' narrative has privileged some values (freedom of speech, of association, of movement, etc.) while overlooking – deliberately or not – others, such as minority rights and gender equality. However, our present worries seem to stem not from the failures of specific gender politics, but rather from the misuse of gender discourse by nationalist populists, as Barbara Einhorn notes, and by what Andrea Pető calls 'anti-gender' movements. It seems that after the optimistic (utopian?) expansion of democratic values and civil societies in the 1990s, we are now facing reactions both in the East and the

ISBN Print: 9783847110873 – ISBN E-Book: 9783847010876

West of Europe, where national/cultural homogeneity and exclusion of 'Others' is demanded. The Brexit referendum, the presidential elections in the US, the election of an army general as president of Bulgaria reveal reactions of fear, anger and neglect of rational arguments. Paraphrasing Ortega y Gasset, we seem to be experiencing a 'revolt of the majorities' – those majorities, which have felt under threat by refugees, immigrants and minorities, by openness, diversity and tolerance. Whether feminist solidarity can deconstruct those threats and 'rescue the European project', as Barbara Einhorn calls for, is not at all certain, but is definitely worth trying. For what we know from '1989' is that gender equality in non-democratic societies is a dubious achievement.

Andrea Pető: The contributors of this Round Table are asking what relevance '1989' had for the lives and everyday practices of women in Central Europe. That is a very legitimate question to ask, also on the individual level. In my course on oral history I am often asked what I think about the myth of oral history: women, in particular, usually narrate their life stories in relation to private events while men rather refer to public events. As a response I usually share the story that in 1989, while I was breast-feeding my son every three hours, my partner once came home and told me that the wall went down. I remember thinking hard about if I had anything to do with any walls and concluded that my assistance was not needed. It took two or three days until I learned from the cover page of a newspaper that the wall my partner had mentioned happened to be the Berlin Wall. This story illustrates the point Libora Oates-Indruchová makes in her contribution that we falsely assume that everybody's life must have changed in 1989. If you interviewed me I would say that my life has definitely changed first and foremost with the birth of my child. But the analysis of women's narratives reveals, as mentioned in Daniela Koleva's contribution, that the "return narrative" labels the period of state feminism as deviation, passing the history of progressive political praxis and theory into oblivion, while at the same time silencing women's individual experiences. '1989' posed a challenge to feminist politics not only because it tied neoliberalism and women's emancipation together, but at the same time discredited the progressive tradition of women's emancipation by focusing on structural obstacles of emancipation.

Also, '1989' posed a question for the conservative forces asking what kind of conservatism they should be following. There were several models, but forty years of state emancipation had reduced conservatism to the level of subculture. That version of conservatism, which was based on imagined and idealised familialism, was mainstreamed after 1989. It will be a question for the future of how this familialism will be taken over by the far right extremist forces placing it on their own political agenda. Especially, progress in reaching gender equality in the neoliberal framework has stagnated during the last two decades, adding to a

ISBN Print: 9783847110873 – ISBN E-Book: 9783847010876

general feeling of frustration and disappointment with equality politics in general, and leading many women to doubt the equality paradigm itself and to seek alternative empowerment in anti-modernist and nationalist projects such as familialism or far right extremism. In very much the same fashion Nazi and fascist parties attracted considerable support of women voters in the interwar years. Let's hope the current process can be reversed via discussions of "commonalities between feminists across Europe" as Barbara Einhorn argues. We already paid a high price for playing by the rules of the Cold War divide for too long.

Sławomira Walczewska: In der Diskussion sticht besonders hervor, wie schwierig eine Bewertung des Wandels gerade aus der Gender-Perspektive zu sein scheint. War es vorher besser oder schlechter? Haben die Frauen durch den Mauerfall gewonnen oder verloren? Oder vielleicht: In welcher Hinsicht haben sie/wir verloren und in welcher – gewonnen? Diese Schwierigkeiten sind bekannt, die Fragen kommen immer aufs Neue und meistens bleiben sie unbeantwortet. In unserer Diskussion war es interessant zu beobachten, welche unterschiedlichen Referenzrahmen die Diskutantinnen benutzt haben, um diese Frage nach der Bewertung zu beantworten.

Der Triumphalismus der Parole von der „Rückkehr nach Europa" wurde entweder in Frage gestellt oder ganz abgelehnt. Zusätzlich hat Andrea Pető das damit verbundene Konzept von Europa kritisiert: Es sei zu eng und blende vor allem Kriege, Totalitarismen, den Genozid, Flucht und Massendeportationen aus, die auch ein Teil dieses Europas sind. Europa könne nur ein feministisch akzeptabler Wert und eine erstrebenswerte politische Konstruktion sein, wenn es anders, eben gerade nicht durch Vergessenheit oder Ausschließung bestimmt würde. Nach dem Mauerfall haben sich die Frauen ganz bestimmt nicht in Bewegung Richtung Europa gesetzt. Aus der Gender-Perspektive lassen sich die mit dem Mauerfall verbundenen Prozesse nicht als „Rückkehr der Frauen nach Europa" beschreiben.

Die binären Kategorien „links und sozial" versus „neoliberal und konservativ" sind auch nicht wirklich hilfreich. War der Realsozialismus mit seinen Kinderkrippen, aber ohne bürgerliche Freiheiten besser für Frauen als der Kapitalismus, der zwar das Abtreibungsverbot brachte, zugleich aber auch die Vereinigungsfreiheit und die Möglichkeit, gegen das Verbot zu protestieren? In den postsozialistischen Ländern ist sowohl eine Zuordnung des Feminismus zur politischen Linken als auch eine Unterteilung der politischen Szene in „links" und „rechts" weit davon entfernt, selbstverständlich zu sein. Der Versuch, emanzipatorische Anliegen „weder links noch rechts, sondern vorne" (etwa im Verbund mit den Grünen) zu platzieren, sind wegen der parteiübergreifenden Misogynie gescheitert.

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Ich bin der Meinung, dass ein feministischer Maßstab nötig ist, um die Bedeutung, die der politische Wandel für Frauen hatte, einzuschätzen. In meinem Text habe ich vorgeschlagen, dass ein solcher Maßstab und Referenzrahmen persönliche Freiheit sowie Solidarität sein könnten. Emanzipatorisch wären also solche Ereignisse und Prozesse, in denen Frauen ihre persönliche Freiheit erleben und zugleich vollständig am gesellschaftlichen Leben teilnehmen. In dieser Hinsicht waren die Jahre 1980 und 1981 in Polen viel bedeutsamer als das Jahr 1989. Während des „Karnevals der Solidarność" 1980/81 erfolgte ein solcher Aufbruch. Dagegen wird das Jahr des Runden Tisches, 1989, durch die rein symbolische Teilnahme einer einzigen Frau, also durch die krasse Marginalisierung von Frauen, charakterisiert.

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